REMARKS ON TRANSLATION STRATEGIES – ISHIGURO'S "THE REMAINS OF THE DAY" *AS A CASE IN POINT*

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Abstract: *The paper aims to examine the text of the Romanian literary translation of Ishiguro's famous novel, starting from punctual remarks based on a number of translation procedures and strategies, including the opposition 'foreignization' vs. 'domestication'. The conclusions also relate to the current status of literary translation in this country, or the more or less official trends affecting standardization in the field.*

Keywords: *literary translation, mistranslation, False Friends, semantic and stylistic adequacy, Ishiguro.*

1. Introduction: Translation is conceived of as both a craft and an art, a skill and a technique, a process and a product. It would be needless to add that it represents a difficult human enterprise, the complexity of which is given by the many factors and influences (both theoretical and practical) involved. A number of oppositions are still being debated within the scope of translation studies, such as: possibility vs. impossibility of translating, literal vs. free translation, faithful vs. unfaithful translation, *Source-Language*-oriented translation vs. *Target-Language*-oriented translation. They formed the backbone of the long-standing preoccupation of famous experts in the field like Walter Benjamin, José Ortega y Gasset, I. A. Richards, Z. S. Harris, Edmond Cary, Theodore Savory, R. A. Browner, Georges Mounin, Roman Jakobson, George Steiner, John C. Catford, Jean-Paul Vinay, Jean Darbelnet, James S. Holmes, Eugene Nida, Louis Kelly, Umberto Eco, A. Neubert, P. Newmark, Gideon Toury, Mary Snell-Hornby, Roger T. Bell, Susan Bassnet, Mona Baker, L. Levițchi, A. Bantaș, who were mainly interested in equivalence, invariables, translating metaphor, irony, humour, punning, idioms, proper names, proverbs, poetry, modality, type and function in translation, the direction of the translation process, the diachronic-synchronic opposition, etc. A very interesting contribution to illuminating some aspects essentially having to do with the last opposition in the enumeration above is Lawrence Venuti's influential 1995 book *The Translator's Invisibility. A History of Translation*, where the author makes a case for the translator's "greater visibility and recognition", while suggesting two (relatively) new concepts in translation theory, i.e. *domestication* and *foreignization*. The author examines the method through which the foreign text is adapted and transferred to the cultural values of the target language, in opposition to the method that defends the "linguistic and cultural differences" of the source text, while paying less attention to the cultural values of the target language (Venuti, 20). Venuti claims that some translators' indulging in an "illusion of transparency" is likely to lead to "ethnocentric violence", which can harm the genuine cultural exchange between the two languages (and literatures). The opposite stand, he claims, i.e. *foreignization*, achieved through a set of "deviant translation strategies", can be very useful (Venuti, 185). His claims were variously interpreted as encouraging unrestricted globalization and linguistic (as well as

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cultural) imperialism, virtually denying the readers' recognizing their own expectations in the translated text, given that today literary translation is generally perceived as more reader- than author-oriented.

This paper was suggested by the parallel reading of a novel in English (i.e. Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*) and its translation into Romanian (authored by a relatively prominent Romanian writer and translator, R.P.). Our examination essentially regarded those qualities that make a good translation – i.e. accuracy, transparency and fluency, and probed the semantics, stylistics and cultural attitude evinced by the two versions, while having in mind the specificity of the *domestication* / *foreignization* choice. Some of our findings are presented below.

2. Some cases of semantic inadequacy: ● R.P.'s translation (*aceste întâmplări*) did not entirelly render the semantic content of the term *development* (in the excerpt "to one not accustomed to committing such errors, *this development* was rather disturbing"), so we preferred to translate it as "pentru cineva care nu e obişnuit să comită asemenea greşeli, *cursul evenimentelor* era destul de deranjant". Similarly, R.P. mistranslates the phrase *to entertain* (…) *theories* as *a emite teorii*, although the contextual meaning is "to cherish" (Romanian *a nutri*, etc.): so, we chose to translate it as either *să produc* or *să mă las influențat de teorii*. ● Translating *sinister* as *sinistru* is a serious mistake, in this context ("these small errors of recent months have *derived from nothing more sinister than a faulty staff plan*") – cf. Eng. *sinister* "making you feel that something evil, dangerous, or illegal is happening or will happen" (http://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary), so we chose to translate it as *alarmant* – though *necurat* would also have been possible. Also, the phrase *schema de personal* (in R.P.'s rendition) sounds rather "technical" in the context implied by a mere house, so we thought it more adequate to translate the phrase *a faulty staff plan* as *scăpări în planificarea angajării de personal*. ● R.P. mistranslated *perception* (in "employees *of varying degrees of intellect and perception*") as *sensibilitate*: "angajaţi *cu grade variate de inteligenţă şi sensibilitate*", while we chose to translate it as *înțelegere*: "angajați *cu niveluri foarte diferite de inteligență și înțelegere*". ● When rendering *allegation* ("a statement that someone has done something wrong or illegal, but that has not been proved" (http://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary) as *presupunere*, R.P. made a serious semantic mistake. We preferred to say *acuzație*. ● R.P.'s translation of the adjective *unnerving* as *amenințătoare* is besides the point (it means "making one feel worried or uncomfortable" (http://www.collinsdictionary.com), so we preferred to translate it as "*de* […] *derută*". Similarly, translating *engulfed with guilt* as "[*copleşit de*] *vină*" is wrong ("Those were […] *strangely unnerving moments* during which he too […] felt *engulfed with guilt*"): our choice was: "[…] în acele *momente de o stranie derută* chiar și el s-a simțit *cuprins de vinovăție*". ● The phrase *arthritic troubles* was mistranslated as *necazurile legate de gută* (cf. *gout* "a painful disease that makes the joints (…), especially the feet, knees, and hands, swell" – *Cambridge Dictionary*); we chose to render it as *dureri de încheieturi* (the noun *arthritis* means "a serious condition in which a person's joints (…) become painful, swollen, and stiff" – *Cambridge Dictionary*). ● R.P.'s rendition of *to strive* as "a lupta să…" lends an undesirable emphatic overtone ("aşa încât fiecare dintre noi să poată *lupta* mai bine ca să ajungă la "demnitate"). Our translation was "în aşa el încât fiecare dintre noi să se poată *strădui* mai mult ca să ajungă la "demnitate". ● R.P. did not translate the meaning of the adjective

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prone to, preferring to say *caracterizaţi*; the exact Romanian sense of Eng. *prone* ("likely to suffer from an illness or show a particular negative characteristic: *I've always been prone to headaches. He was prone to depression even as a teenager*" (http://dictionary.cambridge.org) is *predispus (la/să)*. ● In the sentence "(…) that any resistance […] to the taking on of duties beyond their traditional boundaries *would* be *compounded* by *any notion* that (…)", R.P. mistranslated the auxiliary verb *would* (part of a Future-in-the-Past) as a "condiţional-optativ" auxiliary (*s-ar combina*). Moreover, the contextual use of *to compound* implies the meaning "make (something bad) worse; intensify the negative aspects of […]" (http://english.stackexchange.com), and yet R.P. mistranslated it as *a se combina* instead of "a fi influenţat (negativ)". R.P.'s versions reads: "Mi-am dat seama […] că orice încercare […] de a se opune […] *s-ar combina* cu…", while we preferred to translate "Eram conştient […] că orice tentativă […] *avea să fie influenţată*…". ● The phrase *in the face of* sees a mere literal rendition: "perseverau *în faţa unor* repetate obstacole", though the phrase actually means "despite having to deal with a difficult situation or problem: *She left home in the face of strong opposition from her parents*" (http://dictionary.cambridge.org), and so it can be translated as *în ciuda / în pofida obstacolelor*. ● The auxiliary *will* is – in this context ("However, *if you will* consider the situation for a moment, you *may come* to see the…") – a modal verb (cf. Rom *a fi amabil / bun să…, a binevoi să…*), just like *may*, which also carries an overtone of irony. Likewise, the Romanian adjective *impropriu* is hardly ever used for the contextual sense of Eng. *improper* ("FORMAL unsuitable or not correct for a particular use or occasion") (http://dictionary.cambridge.org): "However, *if you will* consider the situation for a moment, you *may come* to see the *inappropriateness* of someone", so we preferred to say "Însă, dacă *eşti amabilă să* analizezi situaţia mai atent, *ai putea* să îţi dai seama că este un lucru *total nepotrivit* ca […]". ● R.P. mistranslated the (literary) absolute superlative form *most irritating* (meaning *very irritating*) as if it were a relative superlative (Rom. *cea mai iritantă*). We chose to say "gentlemani *predispuşi la* acea trăsătură de caracter *nespus de supărătoare* la un stăpân". ● The contextual meaning of *incidentally* ("*Incidentally*, I should before now have explained myself as regards my referring to…") was erroneously rendered by R.P. as *întâmplător* instead of *Fiindcă am adus vorba de asta* or *Fiindcă (tot) am ajuns aici*. ● In the sentence "I turned away, the *decanter* of port *still* on my tray", R.P. mistranslated the adverb *still* (which obviously means "as previously", not "another"): "M-am întors ducând *încă o sticlă* de vin de Porto pe tavă", instead of "M-am întors, ducând tava pe care *încă* mai aveam *carafa* de vin de Porto"; obviously, the noun *decanter* ("a vessel, usually an ornamental glass bottle, for holding and serving wine, brandy, or the like" (http://www.dictionary.com) should have been translated as "carafă" rather than "sticlă". ● R.P. mistranslated the adjective *congenial* "(Of a person) pleasing or liked on account of having qualities or interests that are similar to one's own" (english.stackexchange.com) as *săritori* (although, in the context, there is no evidence that the local people were *ready to lend a hand*, or *to be supportive / helpful* to Stevens). So we chose to render it as *de treabă*. ● R.P.'s rendition of the expression "*the cook at Darlington Hall through much of the twenties and thirties*" did not actually include the whole scope of the period in the original: "*bucătăreasa pe care o avusesem la Darlington o bună bucată de timp prin perioada anilor treizeci*". Our own variant reads: "*care fusese bucătăreasă la Darlington Hall o bună bucată de timp, în anii douăzeci şi treizeci*". ● R.P.'s mistranslated the phrase

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to have somebody's ear (which was rendered as *să le ascult părerile*), when it actually means the opposite ("to know someone with power or authority who will listen to you: *He has the director's ear*" (*Cambridge*). We chose to translate the original (*it was my good fortune to have had their ear on many great issues of the day*) as *am avut şansa rară ca vorbele mele să găsească trecere referitor la multe chestiuni importante ale vremii*. ● The sentence "Most conspicuously, in *virtually* the central spot of the […] floor, lay the dustpan Miss Kenton *had alluded to*" was translated by R.P. as "Absolut la vedere, în *virtualul* punct central al podelei […], se afla făraşul despre care *pomenise* domnişoara Kenton", which can be accounted for by the translator's misunderstanding the adverb *virtually* (meaning "almost", "practically", "effectively"), and also the verb *to allude*. We chose to say: "Aşezat cum nu se poate mai la vedere, *practic* în punctul central al podelei […], stătea făraşul la care *făcuse aluzie* domnişoara Kenton". ● In translating the excerpt: "This latter – a stone *construct complete with* a tiled roof – looked very *sturdy*, as indeed it needed to be, *standing as it did in a highly exposed position* against a background of empty fields. Inside, the *paint* was peeling everywhere", R.P. made the following semantic mistakes: (1) (*stone*) *construct* was translated as *construcţie*, instead of *structură*, a word more adequate for a "bus stop", and also more stylistically consistent with Stevens's type of speech; (2) *complete with a tiled roof* was simply translated as "*acoperită de ţigle*" (where we chose to say "*având şi* acoperiş din ţiglă"); (3) *sturdy* was rendered as *impunător*, instead of *solid* (plus the illogicality of the adjective in this context: "arăta foarte *impunător*, cum se şi cuvenea"); (4) *standing as it did in a highly exposed position* was translated as *fiind foarte izolat*, instead of *fiind cu totul expus intemperiilor*; (5) *the paint* was translated as *tencuiala*, instead of *zugrăveala*. ● The English expression *It is not as though (I had expected)*, which is frequently used to say that something did not occur, because it could not have logically occurred, was only partially translated by R.P., as an intensive negation: *Nu aşteptasem niciun fel de…*, while our own choice was the stylistically underlined expression *Nu că m-aș fi așteptat ca…* ● R.P. mistranslated *For all that* as *Aşa stând lucrurile*, though the phrase has an obvious concessive sense – cf. *though*, *nevertheless*, *all the same*, etc., which entitled us to prefer the variant *Cu toate acestea…*

2.1. Cases of mistranslating *False Friends*: R.P. mistranslated the English term *operative* (a notorious *False Friend*) in the excerpt: "Almost all the attractive parts of the house could remain *operative*", using its Romanian sound-alike, *operativ* (which is actually a synonym of *eficient*, *eficace*, *prompt*, *expeditiv*, *activ*, etc.). The correct translation is no doubt *funcțional* (v. Eng. *operative* "working and able to be used" (http://www.ldoceonline.com). ● R.P. mistranslates *downs* as *vale*, although its actual meaning is "(usually *downs*): A gently rolling hill: *the gentle green contours of the downs* (*Oxford*)". We chose to render it by *deluşoare*. ● One of the most serious mistakes R.P. was generated by not grasping the contextual meaning of the noun *fare* (i.e. "A passenger paying to travel in a taxi: *the taxi driver was anxious to pick up a fare*" – *Oxford*), which he mistranslates as "costul transportului"; then he mistranslated *to address* as *a anunţa*. So, the original excerpt: "a taxi driver in New York regularly *addressed his fare* in a manner which if repeated in London would end in…", was rendered by R.P. as "un taximetrist din New York avea un fel *de a anunţa costul transportului* care, dacă ar fi fost repetat la Londra, s-ar fi încheiat cu…", should have read: "un șofer de taxi din New York care *se adresa clienților* în mod

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obișnuit într-o manieră care, dacă ar fi fost repetată / reprodusă în Londra, s-ar fi sfârșit cu…". ● R.P. mistakes *touchstone* (which he renders as *piatra de încercare*, denoting 'a very tough challenge') for *cornerstone* (Rom. "piatră de temelie", "culme/apogeu (al perfecţiunii)", or even "cheie de boltă"). So, the sentence "the ability to *draw up a good staff plan* is the *cornerstone* of *any decent butler's skills*" (which was translated as "*piatra de încercare a dibăciei* fiecărui *majordom corespunzător* este capacitatea de a *redacta o schemă de personal adecvată*") should have read "tocmai capacitatea de a *elabora un plan de angajări corespunzător* reprezintă *piatra de temelie a* competenței unui *bun majordom*". ● The much too similar, almost imitative translation of the verb *to tend to* [*concern myself*] as *a avea tendinţa să* [*mă ocup*], in such contexts as "*I tended to concern myself with international affairs more than domestic ones*", which imply prevalence or frequency (v. http://www.ldoceonline.com: "if something tends to happen, it happens often and is likely to happen again"), is definitely erroneous. So, we chose to render it as "[*m-am ocupat*] *mai degrabă*" – instead of "*am avut tendinţa să mă ocup mai mult de probleme internaţionale decât domestice*" (R.P.)

2.2. Cases of ambiguity: The phrase used by R.P. to render "Your father's *days of dependability* are now passing" (i.e. "*Zilele de siguranţă* ale tatălui dumitale") is at least ambiguous. We believe the following variant would be much more specific: "*Vremea când tatăl dumitale era un om pe care te puteai baza total* începe să apună".

2.3. Sheer howlers: Translating Amer. Eng. *gas* (meaning "petrol") as Rom. *gaze*, instead of *benzină*, is an incredibly gross semantic mistake. P.R.'s error is certainly due to the phenomenon of negative linguistic interference: Eng. *gas* and Rom. *gaz(e)* are well-known *False Friends*. ● In spite of the rather explicit context ("She put her vase down on the table in front of me, then […she] said: "If you wish, Mr Stevens, I might bring in some more *cuttings* for you"), R.P. mistakes *cuttings* ("a piece cut off from a plant that can be used to grow another plant of the same type" – *Cambridge online*) – which can also mean ("an article that has been cut from a newspaper or magazine") – for *clippings* ("an article cut from a newspaper"), and so he translated: "Ea a pus vaza pe masă în faţa mea şi apoi […] a spus: – Dacă doriţi, domnule Stevens, aş putea să vă aduc şi câteva *tăieturi de prin reviste*". The correct variant should be: "A așezat vaza pe masă în faţa mea şi apoi […] a spus: – Dacă doriţi, domnule Stevens, aş putea să vă *mai* aduc *flori proaspăt tăiate*". ● One of the worst howlers in R.P.'s translation was rendering *to be dust-sheeted* as *a șterge praful* (*undeva*), instead of *a fi acoperit cu huse / cearşafuri pentru a nu se prăfui*. So, "the extensive servants' *quarters* […] would be *dust-sheeted*", translated by R.P. as "în *încăperile* întinse ale personalului de serviciu […] urma *să fie şters praful*", should have sounded: "în *spațiul*, destul de mare, rezervat personalului de serviciu […] tot *mobilierul avea să fie acoperit cu huse împotriva prafului*". ● P.R. mistranslated "she *swooped up* the hen in her arms and *proceeded to cradle it*" as "ea *s-a năpustit asupra* găinii, a luat-o în braţe şi *a început s-o legene*", instead of "ea *s-a repezit spre* găină și a ridicat-o în brațe, *ținând-o apoi strâns la piept*". ● The official phrase *National Health* (a shorter variant for *National Health Service*, acronymed as *NHS*), occurring in "What did he lecture you on last night? The Empire? The *National Health*?", was mistranslated as *însănătoşirea Naţiunii*, as though it had been used in reference to an abstract (and preposterous) notion. Our variant was: "Ce conferință v-a (mai) ţinut aseară? Despre Imperiu? Despre *Sistemul (Național) de Sănătate*?" ● The

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entire semantics of the following fragment ("The *footmen* looked relieved to see me, and I immediately signalled *them* to get to their positions") is marred, in R.P.'s variant, by his not having correctly identified the actors of the scene ("*Valetul* a părut uşurat când m-a zărit şi *le*-am făcut imediat semn *tuturor celorlalţi subalterni* să treacă fiecare la locul lui"). It seems the mistake arose from pure lack of attention – using the singular (*valetul*) instead of the plural (see the pl. form in the original text: *the footmen*), and so the plural form *them* came to be interpreted as designating… *other individuals* (!). Our proposed variant reads: "*Valeţii* au părut uşuraţi când m-au revăzut, iar eu *le*-am făcut imediat semn să treacă la locurile *lor*". ● A similar error occurred in translating the fragment: "His lordship emerged to meet him [Ribbentrop] and *the two gentlemen appeared to exchange* complicit glances before disappearing together into the drawing room" – as "Înălţimea sa a ieşit să-l primească, *însoţit de cei doi gentlemeni care au schimbat* priviri complice înainte de a dispărea împreună în salon", which distorts the very message of the fragment: the result is that, in R.P.'s variant, there appears a *third* gentleman (!), who joins Ribbentrop, and then the two *accompany* Lord Darlington into the room (cf. *însoţit de cei doi gentlemeni*). It seems that this *qui-pro-quod* arose from R.P.'s failing to grasp the actual meaning of the verb *appeared* in the context, i.e. 'to seem'. So we proposed the variant "Domnia sa a ieşit ca să-l întâmpine [pe Ribbentrop] şi *ambii gentlemeni aveau aerul că schimbă* priviri complice…"

2.4. Omission. In rendering the sentence "he had just that moment *finalized* plans", we believe that the choice that R.P. made ("că tocmai *plănuise* să…") missed the information expressed by *finalizes*. Therefore, we chose to say "că tocmai îşi *definitivase planurile* de a…". ● The phrase *for ourselves* (in "so that each of us may better *strive* towards attaining 'dignity' *for ourselves*"), which I rendered as "*prin propriile forţe*", was left untranslated by R.P. ● R.P. omitted to translate the phrase *ever increasing* (though he admittedly tried to supplant it by adding the intensifying adverb *efectiv*) – so we considered it appropriate to have an equivalent progressive intensification in the Romanian version "ideea unei călătorii în West Country *a ajuns să ocupe un loc din ce în ce mai însemnat în gândurile mele*" ("the notion of a trip to the West Country *took an ever increasing hold on my thoughts*"). ● In rendering "and I would underline *that it was a preoccupation with these very same professional matters* that led me to consider…", R.P. failed to render the emphasis (which English syntax conveys by means of the emphatic structure *It is/was… that…*) affecting the subject, while seemingly shifting thematic stress to the Direct Object (i.e. *probleme*), by using an intensifier (*absolut identice*), which is comparable to that of the original (*these very same* […] *matters*). Our proposed version reads: *tocmai preocuparea pentru înseşi aceste chestiuni*. ● The word *ceilalţi* instead of *celţi* ("Continentalii – […] şi *ceilalţi*") seems to have been a mistype; our rendition of the original excerpt ("Continentals – and […] the *Celts*") reads: "Continentalii – şi […] *neamurile celtice* […]". ● R.P.'s variant loses semantic information by not translating the adj. *final* (in the phrase "*this final crucial lap*", which we preferred to translate as "*acestei ultime şi hotărâtoare etape*"). ● In the excerpt "I thus set about preparing for the days ahead *as, I imagine, a general might prepare for a battle*", the modal verb *might* (which expresses a hint of assumption, added to the comparative structure introduced by the conjunction *as*), no less than the verb *imagine*, were left untranslated by R.P. ("am început să mă pregătesc pentru zilele care mă aşteptau, *la fel ca un general care se pregăteşte de bătălie*"). We translated them by "*la fel cum îmi închipui că*

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s-ar pregăti un general pentru o bătălie". ● The fragment in the book which begins "I hurried up to the first floor and on turning at the landing was met by a strange sight…", and ends … "and my father was transported up to his room" was left untranslated by R.P. ● The sentence *It really was immaterial whether it was Miss Kenton or a complete stranger who had walked in at that moment* was left untranslated by R.P., so I translated it as: *La drept vorbind, conta prea puțin dacă atunci ar fi intrat domnișoara Kenton sau un om complet străin.* ● The sentence "Then their footsteps separated, his lordship's going towards his study, Mr Cardinal's towards the library" was left untranslated by R.P.

2.5. Adding unnecessary information: The set phrase *margin of error* is translatable into Romanian word for word, using the standard equivalent *marjă de eroare* (cf. also *marjă de siguranță*); anyway, the term *toleranță* seems rather out of place here – so it virtually represents a stylistic gain. ● The phrase *any notion* (*that…*) was erroneously translated as *cel mai neînsemnat indiciu (că)*, where both *cel mai neînsemnat* and *indiciu* slightly overdo the respective meanings. We preferred to render it by means of Rom. *până și de ideea* (*că*).

3. Inadequate or false cultural information: R.P. made a glaring mistake, by not recognizing the sense of the proper noun *Home Counties* – which means "the counties of England that surround London; the counties generally included in the list are Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Surrey, and Sussex (although Sussex does not border London)" (https://en.wikipedia.org) – and rendering it as "*comitatele din Londra*". ● In translating "a man *of some six feet three inches*" as "un om înalt *de aproape doi metri*", R.P. makes a very approximate equivalence of the British measuring units. When we tried to convert feet and inches into meters and centimeters, the result was "*vreun metru și nouăzeci*". (As a matter of fact, the issue of using or not metrical conversion in translating from English seems to be still a matter of debate). ● The expression *conflictului <u>cu</u> Africa de Sud* involves a semantic mistake that was generated by the translator's failing to check the historical and cultural information carried by the phrase *the Southern African conflict*: indeed, the so-called Boer Wars had not been waged *against South Africa* (which did not actually exist then, as a political or state entity), but rather *<u>in</u> South(ern) Africa*. ● We consider that, in translating "Sir Richard Fox, a colleague from his lordship's *Foreign Office* days" as "Sir Richard Fox, un coleg de serviciu din perioada când înălţimea sa lucra la *Foreign Office*", R.P. misused the proper name *Foreign Office*. As a rule, proper names that are used with their original form should be carefully selected, mainly in view of their relative frequency and prominence in use; anyway, they ought to be used very cautiously, primarily because they pose real problems of understanding to the reading public. Given that *Foreign Office* simply means "*Ministerul de Externe* [al Marii Britanii]", we preferred the latter variant. ● R.P. fails to recognize – in the proper noun *Rally*, which he mistranslates as *regrupare a trupelor* – the well-known event that the historical literature in English calls *the Nuremberg Rally* (an annual mass meeting that the Nazis staged between 1923 and 1938). We rendered the word *Rally* as *miting național* (the attribute *național* was added to render the necessary amount of cultural information, without however using the place name *Nürnberg*). ● R.P. failed to (recognize and) translate the proper name *Rhineland*, which is another case of failure to capture cultural and historical information; the noun *Rhineland* is merely the English counterpart of the Romanian noun *Renania* or *regiunea renană* (the

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region that Hitler reoccupied in 1937, in spite of the terms of the Versailles Treaty).

4. Cases of stylistic inadequacy: From the point of view of stylistic equivalence, R.P.'s translation (*Dând cu ochii de mine* – compare with the original text: *On seeing my person*) fails to observe the standards of formal, educated and rather affected verbal expression that characterize Stevens (and also underlie his *narrative voice*); hence, we considered that the best Romanian rendition (i.e. one in keeping with Stevens's classy appearance and *persona*) should include neologisms, and also avoid directly designating *him*; consequently, we chose to translate it as *Observându-mi prezența*, a variant that comes much closer to the style and register quality of the original text. ● The verb *to take a break* (in "I really think you should *take a break*") lends itself to a more natural-sounding and stylistically adequate rendition if we use a phrase like "a(-şi) lua liber / concediu" (etc.). instead of R.P.'s "Zău că ar trebui *să te odihneşti* puţin". ● In rendering the sentence "As so often occurs in these situations, *I had become blind to the obvious*", R.P. used an expression that comes very close to the idea of the original text, but he unfortunately overdid it, by an excess of (traditional) idiomaticity (i.e. *nu am văzut pădurea din pricina copacilor*), which is far from matching the type of speech of the character in the original text. We think the Romanian equivalence has to be more neutral in tone, e.g. *îmi scăpase evidența*. ● In translating "This 'staff' he referred to was, of course, *nothing more than the skeleton team of six* kept on by Lord Darlington's relatives"), we preferred to render the phrase *skeleton team of six* through *un grup de bază, format din şase persoane*, instead of *un nucleu de şase*, which sounds like a strangely 'technical' expression. ● R.P.'s rendition of the excerpt "What I saw was *principally field upon field rolling off into the far distance*", as "Ce am văzut *mai întâi au fost mai multe păşuni învecinate pierzându-se în depărtare*" primarily and visibly lacks literariness, mainly in view of the original – so we chose to render it as "Am văzut *cu precădere câmpuri, urmate de alte câmpuri, unduindu-se până se pierdeau în zare*". ● When translating *many a time* merely as *de multe ori* ("îmi amintesc că *de multe ori* am fost nevoit…"), R.P. missed a rather important stylistic nuance, given that the English phrase is used in literary contexts. Thus, we chose to translate it as *de nenumărate ori*. ● The excerpt "*It does us great discredit to treat* a defeated foe like this" should be rendered as "*Nu ne face deloc cinste să ne purtăm* astfel cu un adversar înfrânt", rather than "*E mai mare ruşinea să tratezi* un adversar învins în felul ăsta" (R.P.). The latter Romanian variant implies an emotional tinge, which represents a stylistic gain on the original. Furthermore, a phrase like *E mai mare ruşinea să…* tends to express an emotional hint very close to passionate rebuke. ● R.P.'s rendition of the sentence "It is, I believe, a quality that *will mark out* the English landscape to any objective observer" – as "Cred că este o însuşire care *va indica* oricărui observator obiectiv") – is rather awkward in terms of style and register, while also missing a grammatical marker (the aspect auxiliary verb *will*), which is used in a frequentative/habitual sense (www.yourdictionary.com: "used to express habit or customary practice: they *will* talk shop for hours on end"). We opted for the adverb *întotdeauna*: "Este, sunt convins, o însuşire care *distinge întotdeauna / fără greș* peisajul englezesc, în ochii oricărui privitor obiectiv…". ● When translating "Whatever do you mean, Mr Stevens?" simply as "Ce vreţi să spuneţi, domnule Stevens?", R.P. fails to render the overtone of rhetorical emphasis evinced by the interrogative pronoun *whatever*, which we tried to make

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up for by using a stylistic-rhetorical *dar*: "Dar ce vreţi să spuneţi, domnule Stevens?" ● The rendition of "The letter does not make specific *the details* of the matter, *as one would hardly expect it to do*…" as "(…) *şi nici nu te-ai aştepta să o facă*" seems too literal, so we considered it more appropriate to translate the original sentence as "Scrisoarea nu lămureşte *detaliile* acestei probleme, *şi nici n-ai avea cum să te aştepţi la asta*…" ● Translating the English intensifying expression "But this small episode is *as good an illustration as any* of…" by "*o ilustrare la fel de bună ca oricare alta*" is marred by too much literality, so we preferred the Romanian superlative variant "Însă acest episod neînsemnat *ilustrează cât se poate de bine*…". Similarly, translating the phrase *uttering witticisms* as *lansării unor vorbe de duh* does not sound too natural; we preferred to say "pericolele care te pândesc când *emiți* vorbe de duh".

5. Inadequate use of the Romanian language: The sentence "*This was not the first time* my employer *had raised such a question*" contains a few censurable semantic, usage and stylistic nuances, in R.P.'s translation (*Nu era prima oară că* stăpânul meu *ridica această problemă*): firstly, Romanians do not usually say *prima oară că*, but rather *prima oară când*; secondly, the verb *a ridica* collocating with the direct object *problemă* implies the idea of "generating (a problem)", not "invoking (a question)" – so we preferred the variant *punea această problemă*. ● Translating the sentence "But let me make it immediately clear – *what I mean by this*; what I mean to say is that […]", R.P tries to avoid repeating the verb *to mean* (and his Romanian counterparts "a vrea să spună / să zică"), thus producing an ambiguous, clumsy structure: *să-mi lămuresc chiar acum tâlcul vorbelor*. We chose to say: "Însă permiteți-mi *să clarific chiar acum în ce sens spun asta.* Ceea ce vreau să zic este că […]". ● The expression "*având drept rezultat existenţa unor angajaţi care au nepermis de mult timp liber la dispoziţie*" sounds rather odd in Romanian (aiming to render Eng. "*employees having an unhealthy amount of time*"), so we preferred to translate that sequence as "*faptul că angajații au la dispoziție anormal de mult timp liber*". ● R.P.'s translation of the excerpt "[*I*] *expended a significant amount of thought to* […]" as: "*am depus multă muncă de gândire pentru a mă asigura că* […]" is too literal, and also debatable from a stylistic angle. So we chose to translate it as "*am depus un efort însemnat meditând asupra ideii că* […]"; also, we rendered "*ensuring that* […]" by "*trebuia făcut tot posibilul ca* […]". ● R.P.'s version in translating the excerpt "*in his attempt to fulfill the role expected of him* by his customers" (i.e. "*în încercarea de* a-şi *îndeplini rolul conform* aşteptărilor") is too literal and un-Romanian, because the phrase *în încercarea de a*… is obviously a calque based on the English phrase *in an attempt to*, although it tends to be frequently used by relatively recent press and media writing in Romania. Our rendition preferred the verb *a se strădui* (*să*). ● R.P. rendition of the sentence "I have heard people describe the moment, when setting sail in a ship, *when one finally loses sight of the land*" was done rather artificially, even automatically: "I-am auzit pe unii oameni descriind momentul în care, după ce vasul a întins pânzele, *pământul dispare într-un târziu din vedere*". We preferred the variant "Am auzit pe unii oameni descriind clipa în care, după ce corabia și-a întins pânzele, *în cele din urmă nu mai vezi deloc țărmul*". ● The association of *însă* and *totuşi* is commonly believed to be non-standard in Romanian, as it conveys a sense of redundancy: "*însă totuşi* nu neglijasem să strecor „*toleranţe*" oriunde era cu putinţă" (translating the original "*but* I had *nevertheless* not been neglectful to incorporate '*margins*' wherever possible"). We

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chose to say "*deși* nu trecusem cu vederea să adaug astfel de „*marje*" oriunde era cu putinţă". ● R.P.'s rendering the sentence "It was *this realization*, along with the fact that he was in M. Dupont's room" as "*Conştientizarea acestui lucru*, precum şi faptul că dânsul se afla în camera lui Monsieur Dupont" admittedly sounds rather artificial. We preferred to translate it as: "*Faptul că mi-am dat seama de acest lucru*, dar şi că se afla în camera lui Monsieur Dupont".● The set phrase (in fact, a proper name equivalent) *(American/US) administration* is, by way of tradition, rendered into Romanian as *guvernul american* or *conducerea Statelor Unite*. Using instead *administraţia americană* / *Administraţia americană* (a phrase that the Romanian media have long been using) seems to be quite erroneous in this context ("the attitude of the present *American administration*").

6. Conclusions: As a result of our modest analysis of, and commentary on R.P.'s Romanian translation of Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*, we can say that a good (i.e. essentially faithful) translation of a book can illuminate some rather unspectacular, yet very valuable aspects of translation studies. It is a fact that R.P.'s translation was good overall (as a matter of fact, the author is a *certified* writer), managing to observe stylistic adequacy, provide an insight into the characters' speech and personality, as well as a sense of the general propensities of the author's personal style (or narrative voice). Actually, most of the translated text could be quoted for appropriacy and stylistic virtuosity. However, it was sad to find a number of mistakes, some of which were due to superficiality in tackling some of the (rather common) challenges of English vocabulary, grammar, usage, style and general cultural information, and some other were due to mere lack of alertness or patience in negotiating various pitfalls and (more or less subtle) nuances of English – which are as many "flies in the ointment", as one could say… The final conclusion could be that the right balance should be kept with regard to *domesticating* and *foreignizing* the translated text – mainly in point of (linguistic) intelligibility and cultural (as well as literary) identity.

A few words ought to be said about the efforts devoted to the "domestication" of the original text, through the filter (i.e. the commonsensical approach) of the translators' own linguistic and literary competence and cultural affiliation. We personally knew the (quite unbelievable) case of a translator who "practiced and polished" her *Romanian* language capabilities and skills, by reading, in keeping with an *educated guess* (somewhat chronologically and empirically, to be frank), whole chapters from Nicolae Filimon – though, in our opinion Duiliu Zamfirescu or Alexandru Vlahuţă would have been a better choice – before embarking on a translation from a 19th century Spanish author (i.e. Galdós)… What she was earnestly seeking was the certification, or the confirmation of her own sense of language and linguistic usage – a (translatorial and cultural) skill that (a lot of translators believe) has to be *practiced and refreshed*. By "brushing up" her literary Romanian, she wanted to have a corroboration of her own mental "19th-century idiom", shifted into the 21st century. So, she was breaking the ground for getting both a yardstick and a model usable in her prospective translation activity. Such endeavours can actually be seen as the manifestation of a type of identity, both linguistic and cultural, of the real existence of a language (rather than postulating or imposing a construct, a concept, a sort of "artistic counterfeiting" of reality – as one might ultimately consider the above-mentioned strategy of *foreignization* –, widely perceived as tolerant and globalizing). The scruples of this kind do not – we believe – boil down to a mere

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"competition" between the synchronic and diachronic planes: in other words, if a translator does not (over)use neologisms, or if he/she tries to also use more or less "vernacular" or "traditional" expressions, that does not necessarily mean they are opaque to "synchronicity", i.e. they are against novelty…

Similarly, we consider that *standardization* is, in this context, at the very heart of the (translators' and readers') awareness of this "linguistic spirit", essentially by means of a set of rules, standards, norms and regularities which represent as many (minimal) standards of linguistic expression itself – rather than of an invented / prefabricated / engineered kind of expression or lingo, a (would-be) idiom, usually labelled as *translatese*. Such standards are basically acting as the matrix of a genuine, demonstrably historical and cultural experience. It would be quite risky to let the free course of creative imagination, in the field of both literature and literary translation, lead to the concoction of an entirely new type of expression or lingo… Whom would such an idiom or *language* belong to, in the last analysis? We should also add that some further research in this area, involving other more or less recent translations from English and American authors (e.g. Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilless*, Melville's *Moby Dick*, Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*), would be a desirable direction in Anglo-Romanian linguistic and translatorial studies.

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